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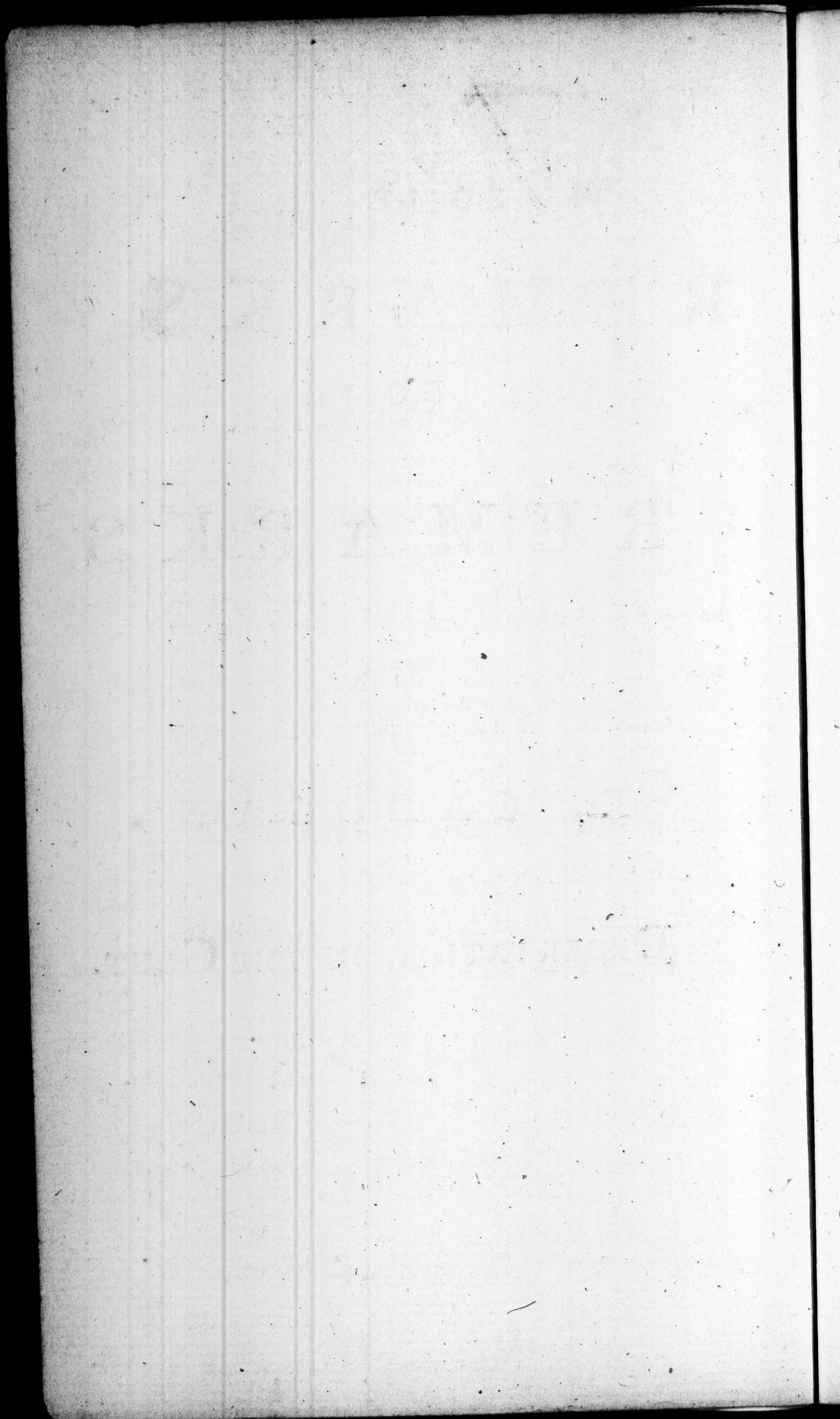
SOME
REMARKS

ON

Dr. CADOGAN'S

DISSERTATION ON THE GOUT.





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Dr. CADOGAN'S

DISSERTATION

ON THE

G O U T,

AND ALL

CHRONIC DISEASES,

JOINTLY CONSIDERED, &c.

— *Risum teneatis amici?*

HORACE.

L O N D O N:

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P R E F A C E.

TH E dissertation on the Gout, &c. which is the subject of the following remarks, having passed through several editions, it may be deemed an instance of great presumption, as well as an impudent arraignment of the judgement of the public, for any person to examine, how far the doctrines it delivers, and the precepts it enjoins, are consonant to right reason and found experience,

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actuated

actuated by the same spirit of true philanthropy, which we must suppose to have inspired Dr. Cadogan, the Author of the following remarks dares to stand up in defence of Old English Roast Beef, and the exhilarating, the generous juice of the grape. And he asks only this favour, to be heard with temper, and to be condemned or acquitted by fair argument and an unprejudiced verdict.

In the Doctor's preface to his Dissertation, page 6, we have the following remarkable words :

“ Some

“ Some industrious men, fancying that whatever is valuable must lie deep, have, with the greatest alacrity in sinking, plunged into the immense abyss of ancient Greek, Roman, and Arabic learning, in hopes to find good precepts of health and sure remedy for disease. But after all their pioneering into endless heaps of rubbish, what have they found at last but this ? That some of the ancients were very ingenious in guessing wrong ; for guess was all they did ; they never studied nature at all, and there-

fore knew nothing of her, but either blindly followed or combated each other's opinions."

This is a heavy charge, and should be well supported. It is also quite singular, the most eminent modern physicians being of a contrary opinion, as any one may find by perusing their writings. To avoid prolixity, I will only transcribe the sentiments of the late eminent Dr. Huxham, in the Preface to his Essay on Fevers.

" Though

“ Though I have all along strictly kept close to facts and repeated experience, (and where I have reasoned from these I have aimed at the justest analogy) yet I have supported my doctrine and practice very frequently by the authority of the ancients, particularly Hippocrates ; and this I have the rather done, as well knowing of what great use they were to me in the course of my studies and practice ; and also with a view of recommending their frequent perusal to young physicians. But although my advice

vice

vice perhaps, in this matter, may have no great weight, yet I hope the concurrent judgement of the greatest masters in our profession will be duly regarded.

“ I will not take upon me to say a person cannot be a good physician without consulting that great oracle of physic, and reading the ancients ; but this let me say, he will make a much better physician for so doing ; and I believe few, if any, ever made any considerable figure in the profes-

profession, who had not studied them. Indeed, Hippocrates hath been accounted the very father of physick, and the plan which he laid down, as the basis of all true and solid medicine : and it hath been constantly held in the highest veneration by all his successors, at least by all those who were capable judges of the matter. The reason of which is evidently this, that he studied nature with the greatest care and assiduity, and copied and followed her too with the greatest exactness ; so that his observations

vations have been found perfectly just through all succeeding ages."

It appears doubtful whether the Dr. intended to confer honour or disgrace on empiricism, when he says, "Some few, and very few, useful discoveries, they * made in medicine, which have descended to us, and with some late tricks in chemistry, are the chief foundation of modern quackery."

But leaving the remainder of the Preface, we hasten to the dissertation itself.

* That is, the Ancients.

S O M E
R E M A R K S

O N
Dr. C A D O G A N' s

DISSERTATION on the GOUT.

IT has been generally allowed (and the arguments made use of to prove the contrary, ought to be very conclusive) that the seeds of many diseases are born with us, and either lie dormant during our lives, or are brought into action, as some necessary causes do or do not give them an opportunity of appearing. That we (page 11, 12) 'bring upon ourselves all that class of complaints

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which

which the learned call chronic diseases, by our own indulgencies, excesses, or mistaken habits of life, or by suffering our ill-conducted passions to lead us astray or disturb our peace of mind,' seems to be doubtful ; for we find children severely tormented with the stone, jaundice, &c. who cannot justly be accused as the ' authors of these miseries.' Nor is it enough to answer here, that such disease arose from the indiscretion of the mother or nurse, since of ten children in the same family, who were all treated in a similar manner, nine shall escape the said diseases. Is there any thing essential to the constitution of such an infant, that he should be thus singularly affected? No. Dr. Cadogan says, page 26,
 " there

‘ there is no such thing as any real essential difference of constitution.’

It is a mortifying consideration, that (page 13) ‘ mankind have never yet had a few rational ideas about chronic diseases in general.’ And yet authors have been very particular in the arrangement of diseases, as we find in the writings both of the ancients and moderns. And I dare say, no person of common understanding, did ever imagine ‘ that he might live as he listed with impunity, or that a few drops or powders would be sufficient to establish his health without the assistance of regimen and exercise.

It is not needful, were it possible, that a medicine should be discovered

which would (page 14) 'cure any one disease in its several degrees or stages.' The *Materia Medica* supplies us with an ample variety, perhaps by far too many. If 'the effect of them be but momentary,' they may be repeated so much the more frequently; and many, nay the greater part of them, have no tendency to 'destroy the strongest frames,' if properly administered.

Page 15. There have been quacks and dupes to them in all ages; but what have the bulk of mankind (unless the Dr. chuses to lump them under one or other of these respectable denominations) to do with either?

With respect to the gout, those who have been long under the domination

nion of so terrible a disease, are naturally led to attend to the most distant prospect of relief, nor can they be blamed for so doing. A physician of the first rank has encouraged them still to hope * ; and for the very good reason by him given, because the cure of intermittent fevers had been happily discovered. Nor in this case is their confidence placed in medicine only ; they are directed to a regimen, and that for a very long period, which bids fair to protract the intervals, although the disease should still repeat its attacks.

To enumerate all the possible causes of chronic diseases, would

* Sydenham on the Gout, page 462.

prove a difficult and extensive task. Page 16. 'Indolence, intemperance, and vexation,' are certainly among the most probable. Nor has this been doubted. Celsus, in his preface, says, 'It is also probable, that though there were very few remedies for distempers known, men nevertheless generally enjoyed good health from the sobriety of their lives, yet untainted by sloth and luxury. For these two vices, first in Greece, and then among us, rendered men liable to many diseases ; and hence that variety of remedies now used, (which was neither necessary in ancient times, nor is yet in other nations) scarcely protracts the lives of a few of us to the verge of old age.'

Yet

Yet there are several other causes of chronic diseases, equally probable with those here specified. Among which are those which unavoidably arise from the different employments and occupations of mankind. Such are the dry gripes (as they are commonly called) in painters, the palsy in miners, &c. &c.

Page 17. ‘ That the gout is neither hereditary, periodical, nor incurable,’ is an assertion confident enough, and which will not be received without very substantial proofs. That it is not hereditary is deduced hence, that were it so, every branch of a gouty stock must needs be afflicted with it ; but seeing, (as the Dr. hath told us) ‘ the gout is a disease

sease of the very best constitution only,' and whereas he grants 'different persons to be possessed of different degrees of constitutional strength and vigor ;' it does not necessarily follow, that every child who is born of a gouty parent must have the gout, because this may appear in the form of a 'jaundice, rheumatism, stone, cholic, palsy, &c. as the person is more or less robust.' And this may be one good reason why women and children, whose natural texture is less firm, are seldom troubled with the gout.

Page 19. That 'no diseases are hereditary but those of taint or infection, and maleformation,' is likewise much more easily said than proved

proved : however a disquisition of this kind, would be too tedious to enter upon here.

P. 21. It hath been the opinion of the wisest men, that the gout renews its attacks at certain seasons, although it does not keep so exact time as a good clock, or return at a stated day or hour. If not prevented by another disease, or some very sufficient obstacle, the gout will return in the beginning of the year. Whence such a return hath, by way of eminence, been called the Cardinal paroxysm.

P. 21. That 'it is not incurable' is by no means confirmed at present; the small number of those who have
C found

found some relief, compared with the vastly greater one of those who, in spite of all endeavours, still labour under it, and at length fall miserable victims to it, may render it exceedingly doubtful, whether it really does admit of cure, from any means hitherto discovered.

What transport would it affect the gouty sufferer with, could he be assured, that when the paroxysm is past, “the man has no more gout, nor seeds of the gout in him, than he who never had it.” But let every one determine for himself the weight of the reason by which this assertion is supported, which is this ; ‘the gout has often been cured by a milk-diet, which, as long as it lasted, has generally kept the patient free.’

And

And why did this method keep off the gout ? Because ' it relaxed and enervated the man, and did not sufficiently support the health and vigor of his body.' How apparent is the absurdity of this manner of reasoning !

P. 23. Another strong argument brought to prove that the gout is not hereditary is this ; the Dr. is ' firmly persuaded it may be more easily and more perfectly cured than almost any other chronic disease.' *Quid rides ?* Not at the strength of the argument, I hope ; or is it at the rich promise of being regaled hereafter ' with the truest and most philosophic luxury.'

P. 25. Whether 'each disease be a distinct being or thing,' I will not contest, but it is clear that there are 'medicines opposed to each,' from which we may hope for very valuable effects, although in the hands of the ignorant or designing, they may prove poisons instead of remedies.

P. 26. Among other weak deluded mortals, I own I have been led to believe that there 'is great variety of constitution,' as well as 'real essential difference of it.' And among others, these are my reasons for it. One person is excessively disordered with the smell of musk, which to another is the most grateful of odours. One person eats honey as a viand, another, by just tasting shall
swell

swell almost to bursting. There are numberless other peculiarities which might be here introduced, in proof of an amazing and inexplicate diversity of constitution.

P. 26. Where is the impossibility of living to an advanced age without sickness? Why must certain times of life produce many diseases? Who maintains these opinions? The Dr. frequently introduces persons holding the grossest absurdities, that he may have the pleasure of confuting them.

We come now to consider the three grand causes of chronic diseases, namely, indolence, intemperance, and vexation. And first of

IN-

INDOLENCE.

P. 29. The Dr. expreffes his fear, but I am very fure of it, that no man can remove the leaft evil out of nature, even though all the good were not to follow it.

P. 33. The common practitioner is again made to affert, that ‘ cordials, volatiles, bracers, strengtheners, will fupply the place of exercife, &c.’—I was till now to learn ‘ that volatiles did coagulate the juices, and that bracers and strengtheners, while they acted, did corrupt the whole mafs of blood.’

Exercife of body hath been univerfally recommended as an indifpenfable

ble requisite to health, and both reason and experience confirm the doctrine; notwithstanding which, we may find many persons, who, from the nature of their employments, the supineness of their tempers, and the indulgence of their appetites, are very prone to diseases, who yet enjoy a happy degree of health.

The second cause assigned is

INTEMPERANCE.

P. 39. The Doctor's definition of intemperance is very just; but it is not necessary to travel into foreign countries in order to form an idea of bad living. A cottage in the country will answer this end perfectly well.

well. I remember the time when bread-corn was sold at ten shillings the bushel, I was detained for a considerable time with an infirm woman and eight small children in a bleak cottage ; the poor peasant, who had laboured all the day to the utter exhaustion of his ill-supported strength and spirits, returning home late in the evening, found with them no better repast than small horse-beans half boiled, and poured into a dish with a small portion of salt only. And this was esteemed pretty good living, since on some days, the family had no provision at all. I can assure the Doctor, that the poor in this nation experience many hardships not to be exceeded in any country, where life is at all maintained.

P. 43. If a patient, who ‘through the indulgence and mistaken fondness of his parents, had exhausted the first degrees of luxury before he came to the dominion of himself ; and as he advanced in life, had daily taken in more than he could possibly get rid of, insomuch that, finding himself replete and oppressed, and his appetite failing, he had recourse to dainties, sauces, pickles, provocatives of all sorts.’ (what was it that he had recourse to, and which spoiled his constitution at first ?) ‘ Moreover, who had washed down every mouthful with a glass of wine.’ I say, if a patient, under such circumstances, should apply to a physician, would he judge it fit to put him to hard labour ? Is such a pre-

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scription

scription consonant to sound reason, or common direction ? Would it not be better to prepare the body for such a change, by first unloading the vessels, &c.

In regard to diet, the most innocent provisions may be taken to excess, and the highest preparations of art be tasted with safety, while due bounds are set to our indulgence. Nor do the ill effects of excess appear so uniformly as one might expect. The upper servants in a nobleman's family live as luxuriously and idly as any men whatsoever ; and yet, on examination, they will be found as vigorous and as healthy as the most rigid disciple of Sanctorius.

Wine seems to be the object of the Doctor's utter aversion. He does not like bread, nor indeed scarcely any common edible ; but wine is utterly condemned. He will not allow even an inspired apostle to speak in its favor ; yet experience shews, that wine, like all other things, is good in its season ; that it is very friendly to the stomach if properly used, and may be taken with advantage in many cases, and what is very strange, we find the Doctor himself relaxing by and by, and allowing no less quantity than a pint at a time, once or twice in a week.

P. 59. The filthy (to call it by no worse name) custom of taking snuff, hath found one advocate in

Doctor, at least he says it hurts only the nose. But whoever considers the deleterious nature of tobacco (who can tell what is mixed with it?) and how easy its passage to the stomach, will be apt to suspect, that its influence may extend somewhat farther.

A strict confinement to water or small-beer, except at certain intervals, may agree well with some people, but cannot be allowed as an universal maxim. I have known, and could produce instances, where water-drinking has been productive of fatal consequences. The same may be said of suppers. Some men would get no good sleep with them, nor others without them. I dare say, that

any sensible person who will take the pains to attend to the sensations arising within himself from the use of every kind of meats and drinks, will be better able to determine which is best for him, than the most sagacious physician in the universe.

The Doctor closes this head with calling a few hard names, and just hinting where a few clever fellows are to be found.

We now come to the third and last cause of chronic diseases, and which is,

VEXA.

VEXATION.

Every one experiences the good or bad effects of a sudden or lasting agitation of the spirits upon the body. Baglive hath said enough upon this head, chap. 14.

In the course of this discussion, the great Dr. Sydenham gets a blow; and Observations on the Influence of the Air, &c. on the Body are obliquely ridiculed. In short, whatever is not reducible under the three capital clauses above-mentioned, is hissed off the stage.

But the illiberal reflections at the close of this head deserve a castiga-
In

gation, which I have neither authority, nor ability to inflict.

In the curative part, the Doctor, unable to furnish a better method, copies from those ancients which he had long before laid at his feet. Frictions, walking, gestation, &c. are jointly recommended from the fathers of medicine, down to their contemptuous son. He further directs a course of medicines, which work their effects 'like gravel, or shot, in a bottle,' and which sweetners, no doubt, perform very effectually.

P. 90. The immediate transition from one extreme in diet to another, seems liable to many and great objections. And a man does not fear
a rope

a rope much who would risque its application to his neck, upon so hazardous an experiment as this.

At length, after all this declamation, the Doctor seems to veer about, and consents that a pint of wine be allowed once or twice in a week, for the sake of good humour and good company. Surely the Dr. notwithstanding his severe precepts, is a very social man ! It is reasonable to believe that good humour and good company, with a moderate use of what conduces to the very existence of both, will do as much, or more, towards the cure of chronic diseases, than any regimen or medicines without them.

There

There is a vast difference between the bare demands of nature, and the innocent comforts of life. Bread and water, a blanket, and a heath-bush, will serve the turn. But the great, the rich variety of blessings, thrown into our laps by the kind hand of Providence, are not to be unthankfully trodden under foot, or impiously retorted. We may, with pleasure and advantage, solace ourselves with them. They are well, nay admirably adapted to cheer us under the necessary toils and wastes of life ; they elevate our hearts, and should elevate them with gratitude to that inexhaustible fund from whence they descend to us.

The Dr. tells us at the end of his treatise, that ‘ a cancer is nothing more than a place where nature deposits the bad humours of the blood, as appears by its almost constant return to some other parts after extirpation.’

Now this definition of a cancer, gives me no rational idea of its nature. I thought a cancer had been a disease, and not the seat of a disease. Nor do I apprehend how a place can be extirpated and then return to some other part.

To conclude. It is a very disagreeable task to find fault with and expose any thing, which is apparently intended for the instruction
and

and benefit of mankind. Yet if, upon this principle, positions of an absurd nature, and hurtful tendency, are suffered to pass unnoticed, what would be the consequence ? The dissertation before us is worthy of some very sharp censure. Its author violently and unwarrantably abuses the ancients, traduces the most eminent of the moderns, and aims to deprive us of the use of the common supports of life, and to put us upon a level with the most uncultivated of our fellow-creatures. If I have misrepresented or mistaken his meaning in any instance, I beg his pardon, and am ready to make suitable acknowledgments.

F I N I S.